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January 10, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft  
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

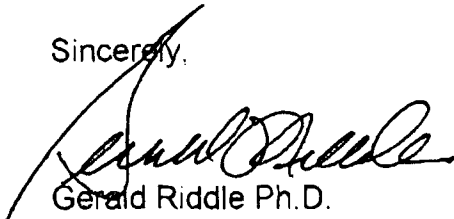
Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

I believe that Microsoft has done much to advance and yet simplify the information age, not for just this country, but worldwide. It is a shame to see the government interfere with Microsoft's freedom to innovate and Microsoft's ability to continue to improve its products. Moreover, The Justice Department is causing harm to the entire Information Technology industry by trying to break up a "world class" company that has done so much to make this country the dominant technological leader of the world. Fortunately, Microsoft has reached a settlement with the Department of Justice regarding the antitrust suit.

This settlement will tackle the issues involved in the original suit as well as others that arose over the past three years. The settlement states that Microsoft must not enter any contracts that may prevent software developers from developing or promoting software that competes with Microsoft. For hardware makers, Microsoft has agreed to provide rights to its Windows operating system to the 20 largest at equal terms and conditions, including the price.

It is necessary that those who are involved in the suit put aside their differences and work to resolve this issue swiftly. The government has intervened in this case for too long; it is time to stop all action at the federal level and get back to the business of innovation.

Sincerely,



Gerald Riddle Ph.D.  
Vice President